

**Telangana Armed Struggle  
And  
The Path of Indian Revolution\***

**Preface to the First English Edition, 1974**

Modern Revisionists led by Soviet leaders have revised the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, in their application to the concrete practice of world revolution. The *Great Debate* that took place inside the world communist movement has exposed its real face. While Marxism-Leninism was and is being defended by CPC headed by Comrade Mao, Soviet revisionist leaders have degenerated into social imperialists. Their line is one of expansionism. They are facing People's Republic of China (PRC) with one-million-strong modern army concentrated on the length and breadth of its border, with highly sophisticated atomic weapons. This, in itself, is a conclusive proof of their being social imperialists.

Soviet revisionist leaders did not stop at revising the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism. They are trying to revise and re-write the history of Russian Revolution, Communist International, and the Czarist Russia to suit the revisionist theories and social-imperialist policies. They are providing abundant material for this purpose through their mass media of communications.

So far as Indian revolution is concerned, they have revised and are still revising Marxism-Leninism as applied to the concrete practice of Indian revolution. For this purpose they started revising Marxist-Leninist approach towards Gandhism and the leadership of Indian National Congress. They are extending revisionism to all problems facing Indian revolution.

We cannot expect their counterparts in India, i.e., the leadership of the CPI, to sit with folded hands. They are doing their best to follow in the foot-steps of the Soviet leaders. One of the specific features of the Indian revolutionary movement was that a liberal

\*This book by D. V. Rao, published for the first time in English in 1974, is a critique of P. Sundarayya's book *The Telangana People's Struggle and Its Lessons* See p.66..

reformist trend was dominating the CPI leadership all through, taking different forms and different slogans at different periods, mainly right and left opportunism and centrism.

Emboldened by modern revisionism, the CPI leadership has also departed from Marxism-Leninism and revised its attitude towards all problems facing Indian revolution. It was easy for it because it was sailing in the same boat even from earlier period. Thus, it is also busy in re-writing the history of Indian revolutionary movement with a revisionist understanding and interpretation.

The armed agrarian revolutionary struggle in Telangana in 1946-51 was the result of constant revolutionary work done by the Communist revolutionaries during earlier period, i.e., from 1941 to 1946. Telangana had its quota of liberals inside the Party. Apart from what they did to harm the revolutionary movement and armed struggle that was going on, they began to write on 'Heroic Telangana' bringing it into their revisionist line. If we go into the material they have produced, we find that the understanding it contains essentially coincides with that of ruling classes towards Telangana armed struggle. Neither the Soviet nor the CPI leadership is ashamed of this, because they together with the Indian ruling classes have become the birds of the same feather who flocked together.

One can understand this phenomenon, because they are more 'open and permissive'. But the situation with the leadership of the CPM is not the same. It claims a monopoly of Marxism-Leninism in India, by adopting a line of parliamentary opposition, whose content is nothing but bourgeois liberalism, which supports the Government in all its basic policies, while opposing it on issues of a secondary nature.

Everyone knows that organised peasantry has participated in the armed struggle of Naxalbari and of Srikakulam. Therefore, they are people's armed struggles whose content is agrarian revolution. It is a fact that the leadership of these struggles has adopted a left adventurist and individual terrorist line in conducting these struggles. Therefore, they have failed to develop them into protracted armed agrarian struggles. But the leadership of the CPM has denounced these struggles as individual and squad terrorism shutting its eyes towards the organised mass participation of the peasantry. Herein lies the identity of their outlook with that of the revisionist leadership of the CPI.

When the leadership of the CPM stooped to deny the mass participation in the armed struggle of Naxalbari and Srikakulam, it has nothing to learn from their experiences. To the leadership of the CPM everything appeared to be left adventurism, and individual and squad terrorism, as far as these struggles were concerned.

This is the period and the context in which P.Sundarayya attempts to look at armed struggle in Telangana (1946-51). The guerilla warfare, which is the highest form of struggle and which was continued to defend the land and *gram-rajyas*, was a struggle for power. Sundarayya, while reducing this to partisan warfare for partial demands, has removed the question of power from the agenda of Telangana armed struggle. This is the variety of revisionism he has adopted in dealing with armed struggle that went on after "Police Action". Though this appears to be a demarcation from CPI leadership, they are one with the other in removing the question of power from the agenda which is a fundamental one in Indian revolution.

Telangana armed struggle is rich with experiences, political, organisational and military. They are being used and should be used by all revolutionaries in advancing the cause of Indian revolution. There are already controversies, and more of them are bound to develop as the revolution advances. We are aware that the present review does not answer all the questions raised by these controversies. We are dealing with them in our various documents. We will continue to do so in future. We are also conscious that a comprehensive work is the need of the hour to help and guide the young revolutionaries in the present phase of the Indian revolution.

The content of armed struggle in Naxalbari and Srikakulam is agrarian revolution, being similar to that of Telangana armed struggle. Their experiences bear special characteristics because they took place in the context of an advanced stage of world as well as Indian revolution. Genuine revolutionaries are busy in studying them diligently, so as to use them as weapons to fight against right and left opportunism inside the revisionism and Trotskyism outside our ranks.

2

National Book Agency (Private) Ltd, Calcutta, which is controlled by the leadership of CPM, had published *Selected Writings of Comrade Mao Tse-Tung* in a single volume, in December, 1967. The publisher's note says that, 'Apart from the selections from the

four-volume edition in English published from Peking (from the Second Chinese edition), this volume also contains three articles', whose titles are given in the note.

But the note keeps silence over the works which are omitted from the four volume edition, nor it gives any reason for such omission. We are more concerned with the omission of two important works of Mao. The first is: *Why the Red Political Power Can Exist in China?* an article written by Mao on October 5, 1928. The second is: *Problems of Strategy in Guerilla War Against Japan*, written in May, 1938.

Mao, while discussing the 'Reasons for the emergence and survival of Red Political Power in China' in the said article, says as follows:

*The long term survival inside a country of one or more small areas under red political power completely encircled by white regime is a phenomenon that has never occurred anywhere else in the world. There are special reasons for this unusual phenomenon. It can exist and develop only under certain conditions.*

*First is can occur in any imperialist country or in any colony under direct imperialist rule.....*

In the notes which are included towards the end of this article, the last sentence was explained at length. After briefly reviewing the advance of liberation struggles during the period of Second World War, and mentioning the changed co-relation of forces after the War, the following sentences are included in the notes:

*Thus much as in China, it has become possible for the peoples of all or at least some of the colonial countries in the east to maintain big and small revolutionary base areas and revolutionary regimes over a long period of time, and to carry on long revolutionary wars in which to surround the cities from the countryside and then gradually to advance to take the cities and win nation-wide victory. The view held by Comrade Mao Tse-Tung in 1928 on the question of establishing independent regimes in colonies under direct imperialist rule has changed as a result of the changes in the situation*

The subject-matter discussed in the article concerns with a period when there was a Kuomintang regime in China. Basing on the experiences of liberation movements during the period of Second World War, Mao advocates the path of People's War to countries

directly ruled by imperialists. It applies to all or at least some as the note suggests. Thus Mao had come to a definite conclusion of applicability of the path of Peoples's War to colonies and semi-colonies, towards the end of Second World War. One need not take shelter under the words *at least some* to exempt India from this category. The very fact that the armed struggle could continue and survive for five long years in Telangana, and that the demand for withdrawal had come from the leadership, and not from the people or ranks, shows that it was possible to develop it into a protracted armed struggle if the leadership had a correct understanding of the path of revolution in colonies and semi colonies. When the CPI delegation visited China, the Chinese leadership knew full well that a section of Indian leadership who once accepted this rejected it through the *Statement of Policy* adopted in October, 1951 and through the document called 'A Note on Indian Situation 1951'.

The omission of the above article with the relevant notes by NBA is not accidental. It has a direct bearing on the leadership's attitude towards the Telangana armed struggle, and the Naxalbari armed struggle which had already started by that time. Since the leadership was opposed to armed struggle itself, it omitted this article to suit the parliamentary path.

The second one which was omitted is Mao's famous work in *Problems of Strategy in Guerilla War Against Japan*. No reason was given for this omission. Mao discusses all the fundamental problems of guerilla warfare in this work and it is a classic by itself. The omission of this work means that the leadership is fundamentally opposed to the guerilla warfare as enunciated by Mao. Their opposition to the peasants' armed struggle of Naxalbari and Srikakulam, taken together with this important omission, is a conclusive proof that they are opposed to armed struggle and are after parliamentary path. It should be understood that Mao has developed his theory basing himself on Lenin's article *On Guerilla Warfare* (1906) and applying it to the concrete practice of Chinese revolution.

Mao stresses time and again that building of united front and the Party is inseparable from armed struggle in Chinese revolution. It is so in all revolutions of colonial and semicolonial countries. When the classical work on guerilla warfare is removed from Mao's writings, the high-sounding words contained in the publishers' note, i.e., ".....these writings which embody the creative and successful

*application of Marxism-Leninism to semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions of pre-liberation China are of great and immediate interest to the communists and people of all backward countries"*, become empty. By this omission, the leadership is giving expression to its revisionist understanding of Chinese revolution as well as Indian revolution.

Their formal expression that the Telangana armed struggle is a partisan warfare for partial demands is an extension of their revisionism to their understanding and characterisation of the struggle.

## 3

There are some who pose themselves as revolutionaries accepting Mao Tse-Tung's Thought. At the same time, they are one with the document *A note on Indian Situation 1951*, as the basis of their tactical line: because, according to them, it advocates People's War, fundamentally. In fact, the contrary is the truth. The document rejects Chinese path, the path of People's War in its application to Indian revolution. Let us go into the following extracts of the relevant documents:

*Our revolution in many respects differs from the classical Russian Revolution, but to a great extent is similar to that of the Chinese Revolution. The perspective liekly is not that of a general strike and armed uprising leading to liberation of the rural side but of dogged resistance and prolonged civil war in the form of agrarian revolution, culminating in the capture of political power by the Democratic Front.*

**(The Thesis of Andhra Secretariat, May, 1948, quoted by Sundarayya - P.393)**

This is the key passage which expresses the basic understanding of the then Andhra Secretariat. This passage does not contain anything which can be interpreted as Indian revolution being an imitation of Chinese revolution. It only says that our revolution is *similar* 'to a great extent' to that of Chinese revolution. Taking similarities as the basis, we are expected to apply the Chinese path to the concrete practice of Indian revolution. Thus, the understanding it provides is fundamentally a correct one.

*Note on Indian Situation 1951 (Kishan Document)*, instead of basing its criticism on this passage, distorts it in the following manner.

Afterwards, on the basis of wrong understanding of the experience of Chinese Revolution, the thesis was put forward that the Indian Revolution would develop **exactly in the same way** as the revolution in China and that partisan war would be the main or almost the only weapon to ensure its victory (emphasis added).

Obviously, the words *exactly in the same way* are distortion of what **Andhra Thesis** said. Basing on this distortion, the *Note* says that the *'Thesis minimised the working class and its actions'* and asks the Party to *'discard'* the above *'erroneous thesis.'*

This is not the place where we can discuss the question of role of the working class in Chinese revolution. Our purpose in quoting the above passage is to explain that the above mentioned note rejects Chinese path as applied to Indian situation and advocates the following course of action:

*Therefore, in order to achieve victory of the popular democratic revolution, it is absolutely essential to combine two basic factors of the revolution, the partisan war of the peasants and workers' uprising in the cities.*

Though the path of People's War does not exclude workers' uprising at the time of their liberation, the path put forward by the *Note* is not the same as People's War. It *'discards'* this path as *'erroneous thesis'* in clearest possible terms. Therefore Communist Revolutionaries must be vigilant against introducing alien conceptions of People's War by the pseudo-revolutionaries. On the one hand they are embracing Trotskyism by insisting on individual terrorism as a substitute for People's War by characterising the *'Note on Indian Situation 1951'*, that it fundamentally advocates a People's War. We have to fight these outlooks as departure from Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought and eliminate them from the understanding of our ranks.

We are giving an extract from the document of Amarabad Regional Committee, which we have mentioned in our review. There is another extract from a Telugu book written by M. Basavapunniah, in which he has given the full text of the note submitted by C. Rajeswara Rao, in the meeting mentioned by P. Sundarayya on p 416-17. These are in the form of appendices given at the end of the book. This material together with a report of Manukota area (p.524-27) shows that the situations in the fighting areas did not provide any basis for withdrawal of armed struggle. The central,

as well as a section of Andhra P. C. leadership had taken this decision on their own account, without any relation to the guerillas and party ranks, without observing the basic principles of guerilla warfare. Subsequent events have shown that this leadership has taken a parliamentary path in the form of revisionism and neo-revisionism. We hope this review will give a basically correct understanding of Telangana armed struggle (1946-51) as against neorevisionist understanding provided in P. Sundarayya's book *Telangana People's Struggle and its Lessons'*.